



Northwest student Gabby Zahn sits in the observation area at the mass vaccination clinic April 7 after receiving her Moderna vaccine. The percentage of county residents that have completed the vaccination process, 21.8%, is lower than the percentage of residents that have started the process at 30.3%.

ADDALYNN BRADBURY | NW MISSOURIAN

Sustainability coordinator dies at 51

KENDRICK CALFEE
News Editor | @calfee_kc
MADELINE MAPES
Assistant News Editor | @MadelineDMapes

His comforting smile could ease the worries of a stranger, but he knew no strangers. His kind, yet sturdy presence challenged people to do better each day — a true personification of Pumbaa from “The Lion King.” After all, he was Mr. Hakuna Matata.

John Mark Viau, 51, of Maryville, Missouri, died in his home April 12. His family, friends and colleagues remember him as a kindhearted man always looking to help others. He worked harder than any of his friends knew and frequently challenged his peers to reach higher.

“If everybody worked as hard as John, this world would be a different place,” said Mark Hetzler, a friend and colleague of John Viau.

After surviving a stroke and other ailments in the past few years, John Viau died Monday with family at his side.

At Northwest, he was a passionate advocate for recycling and sustainability efforts. He began work at the University in 2000 as a painter and maintenance staffer, then became a carpenter supervisor. Since 2011, he had served as the sustainability coordinator.

His wife Rose Viau, vice president of student affairs: residential and auxiliary services, said he had an extensive knowledge and deep love for Northwest and that he always looked for ways to make others’ lives easier.

“There were many days I don’t think he did anything that was his job,” Rose Viau said. “He was just helping somebody else with something they needed.”

Deb Redmond, custodial supervisor at Northwest, worked closely with John Viau and has an office two doors down from where he worked. She said he always asked about her day, and if she was having a bad one, he made an effort to help.

“The vending machine was in between our offices so every once in a while he’d stop and get a Diet Coke, pop in and say, ‘How’s it going?’ and I’d say, ‘Oh, it’s going,’ and he goes, ‘Are you having a rough day?’ I said, ‘Oh, yeah,’” Redmond said. “He’d come in, he’d sit down, shut the door and say, ‘How can I help you out?’”

SEE JOHN VIAU | A4

‘Good has been the theme’

Health officials optimistic after low COVID-19 cases, steady vaccines

MADELINE MAPES
Assistant News Editor | @MadelineDMapes

Local health officials anticipate Nodaway County to be heading toward the turn that would put the county closer to normalcy amid the COVID-19 pandemic.

Mosaic Medical Center - Maryville President Nate Blackford said if Nodaway County continues to have low cases of COVID-19, and people continue to get vaccinated, then the county may start to return to normal faster than anticipated.

Blackford has remained optimistic the past few weeks and has high hopes for the progress of the county.

“Good has been the theme for the last several weeks,” Blackford said about COVID-19 cases. “That’s as low as it’s been since, you know, probably this time last year.”

According to the Nodaway County and Northwest COVID-19 dashboards, only one person tested positive for COVID-19 April 11. The county has 11 active cases, five of which involve Northwest staff or students, while the seven-day rolling average of new COVID-19 cases is one.

“We’re getting less and less people coming into the emergency room or the respiratory clinic with concerns of COVID, so that’s wonderful,” Blackford said.

Blackford said these trends could also lead to the success of the University’s plan to return to fully in-person classes next fall. In order for this to happen, Blackford encourages

people to continue getting the vaccine and follow mitigation measures.

In Nodaway County, as of April 13, 21.8% of local residents have completed the vaccination process, while 30.3% of Nodaway Countians have initiated the vaccination process.

In order to reach herd immunity, according to the Mayo Clinic Health System, roughly 70% of the population needs to be vaccinated.

30.3

percent of Nodaway Countians have received their first dose of the COVID-19 vaccine.

“The more the percent of population that is vaccinated allows us to reach that herd immunity, which ... is the important next step for kind of opening things back up,” Blackford said.

Recently, concerns have arisen about the Johnson & Johnson vaccine, which the Food and Drug Administration and the Center for Disease Control and Prevention have recalled due to a rare blood clot that was found in six instances out of 6.8 million doses administered. Mosaic - Maryville’s mass vac-

cination clinics held at the Carl and Cheryl Hughes Fieldhouse have never administered J&J vaccines.

Community Health Nurse Bridget Kenny said at this week’s mass vaccination clinic April 14, 178 first doses were administered and 473 second doses were given as well.

This week’s clinic was also the same clinic where President John Jasinski finished up his vaccination against COVID-19.

Jasinski tweeted the process was “smooth as silk” and thanked all who have been involved in running the mass vaccination clinics.

The Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services tweeted April 13 that all J&J COVID-19 vaccine administration will be paused in the state until further notice.

In the thread, the MDHSS announced that anyone who has received the J&J vaccine and develops severe headaches, abdominal pain, leg pain or shortness of breath within three weeks of being inoculated should contact their health care provider.

Walmart Inc., which did administer J&J vaccines, announced that it has paused administration of the vaccine per CDC and FDA recommendations.

Despite not having a third vaccine to administer — which equates to fewer vaccines on hand — 21% of the state has completed the vaccination process, according to the Missouri COVID-19 dashboard.

Student Senate’s rollover budget for the 2020-21 academic year

Unallocated funds Spent money



The looming rollover budget

Student Senate might put leftover funding toward scholarships

SIDNEY LOWRY
News Reporter | @sidney_lowry

Student Senate’s \$30,000 surplus lessened after only \$5,000 was spent in the 2020-21 academic year, pushing \$25,000 in unallocated funds onto the 99th Student Senate for the 2021-22 academic year.

The first mention of a plan for the rollover budget happened in early February, consisting of possibly buying a net to protect people’s car windshields, some type of mural or making changes to the Bearcat Commons.

Though this is the 98th Student Senate Treasurer Connor Thompson’s proposal, the responsibility of making sure the money will be used is now placed on the 99th Student

Senate Treasurer Jenna Lee-Johnson. At the Feb. 23 Student Senate meeting, they gave \$1,500 from the rollover budget to a winter coat drive, but there has been a lack of use of the money ever since.

Almost two months later, the plan for the unallocated \$25,000 has remained quiet until one of the last meetings of the semester.

At the April 6 meeting, Thompson proposed the idea of making the leftover money into a scholarship for international students who didn’t receive aid under the Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act.

“I definitely want to make sure it is a priority,” Lee-Johnson said. “I know we get our minds on other

things and then put budget on the backburner, but it’s a huge amount of money, and I think we need to treat it with a big priority.”

Thompson estimated that anywhere between 180 and 190 international students would receive the scholarship that is to be funded by the rollover budget.

But with the international enrollment for the spring 2021 semester being at 364, this means these scholarships will be given based on need.

Though the money has been proposed to go to the scholarship, it is still unknown when it would be given to students.

SEE ROLLOVER | A4

Student Senate considers adding academic positions

SIDNEY LOWRY
News Reporter | @sidney_lowry

In an effort to be more inclusive, the 98th Student Senate proposed adopting 11 new Senate positions for the 2021-22 academic year.

Elizabeth Motazedi, freshman class representative for the 98th Student Senate, proposed these positions to bring in representatives from each of Northwest’s academic departments to represent students within their respective fields. These positions, if approved, would be appointed by professors and advisers within the academic departments and voted on by students in the fall during freshman class representative elections.

A potential problem with the proposed positions is the ability to fill them. Six voting positions weren’t filled in the 99th Student Senate due to lack of people running for them.

“I’d like to say they would be filled, but honestly, I couldn’t tell you,” Motazedi said. “These past two Senate elections have been so weird because of COVID-19, like having two executive offices run

unopposed. I definitely don’t think that it is because people aren’t interested. I think it is because COVID-19 has taken it out of everyone.”

Though there have been challenges in filling positions, Motazedi has continued with the proposal to bring new members to Senate.

“I think we should make them full senators, and they would have voting positions, be required to go to every meeting, but also I think they should even have higher requirements,” Motazedi said.

Since these senators would represent their respective departments, Motazedi said they would be required to have passing grades in all major-specific classes and be held to the same standards as other voting senators, like having a 2.5 GPA and holding office hours.

While Student Senate has organizational representatives like a Student Activities Council representative, Motazedi is looking to bring in more students from the academic side.

SEE SENATE | A4

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4th Judicial Circuit to add mental health board

HAILEY MACH
News Reporter | @haileymach98

The 4th Judicial Circuit Leadership Team on Mental Health and Criminal Justice is six weeks into their crisis hotline being available 24/7. Additionally, the team is working to create a board specifically dedicated for mental illnesses.

In January, the Missouri Department of Corrections and Gov. Mike Parson’s office approved the \$50,000 Justice Reinvestment Grant for mental health crisis intervention programs in the 4th Judicial Circuit. The 4th Judicial Circuit consists of five counties: Atchison, Gentry, Holt, Nodaway and Worth counties.

Bob Rice, associate circuit judge and leader of the 4th Ju-

dicial Circuit Leadership Team, said immediately following the approval of the grant, the leadership team was able to start up the 24/7 hotline.

Initially, the hotline had one counselor from the Family Guidance Counseling Center on call during the daytime for the 4th Judicial Circuit along with four other counties. Now, another counselor has joined the team to assist with answering these calls.

Rice said law enforcement agencies are currently attending Crisis Intervention Training through the Family Guidance Counseling Center every Wednesday.

Along with the Family Guidance Counseling Center, the New Beginning Counseling Center in Nodaway County assists in answering

calls from the hotline.

Michelle Jones, a licensed clinical social worker, chief operating officer and founder of New Beginnings Counseling Center, and member of the leadership team, is on call 24/7 for the crisis hotline. When outside of her office, Jones’ office phone directs the calls to her work cellphone.

Jones said there is a plan to hire another counselor to help field these calls.

Rice said the leadership team is in the works of creating a mental health board in the 4th Judicial Circuit to dedicate their time solely to these illnesses. The team is putting together bylaws and other necessary paperwork to get this board together as soon as possible.

According to the Missouri Department of Health and Human services, 59 residents within the 4th Judicial Circuit counties died from suicide from 2009 to 2018.

“I keep thinking about the fact that it’s essentially a person every other month that’s committing suicide somewhere in the 4th Judicial Circuit,” Rice said. “I really think that ought to ring a bell with the urgency of why we need to act now and not wait.”

Rice added that there is a need to educate the public on the mental health crisis northwest Missouri is facing and the lack of resources.

“To create comprehensive mental health services here in northwest Missouri, here in the 4th Judicial Circuit, by creating this community mental health board”

Rice said the board would decide how to use funds for resources, to address mental health and addiction prevention and treatment.

He said the leadership team had composed a public information campaign they plan to present to county commissions, municipalities, civic clubs, church clubs and the University.

Rice noted the leadership team is looking at creating a 15-person board, with three representatives from each county in the 4th Judicial Circuit. Once this mental health board is created, Rice said the plan is for each of these representatives



ADDALYNN BRADBURY | NW MISSOURIAN
Michelle Jones, the voice behind the 24/7 crisis hotline, sits in her office. Jones is a licensed clinical social worker, chief operating officer and founder of New Beginnings Counseling Center, and member of the leadership team.

to go to their county commission and request to place a property tax on the ballot.

“If the county voters in that area vote to approve it ... there would be a property tax assessment,” Rice said. “That money collected would go specifically to the community mental health fund.”

Jones said the biggest piece of the leadership team is the organizations and businesses like New Beginnings Counseling Center, Family Guidance Counseling Center and Mosaic Medical Center coming together in the community to help out those in need.

“We are about, basically, bridging all of the services together in the communities to get people who need mental health and alcohol and substance abuse treatment services to them,” Jones said.

Jones said the crisis hotline is especially targeting those who don’t qualify for Medicaid or insurance.

She noted the team has been working closely with the division of social services and the juvenile office and the Missouri Department of Corrections Board of Probation and Parole.

Jones said the service can be beneficial to the people who are more recently being released from prison or jail and have lost their health insurance or their job. She added that the hotline can also help people from being reincarcerated by providing them with treatment they may need.

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City seeks more funding for South Main project gap

KENDRICK CALFEE
News Editor | @calfee_kc

For at least three weeks, Maryville city staff have been working through different ways to address the \$3.5 million gap in the South Main Improvement Project.

In a lengthy presentation recounting the intricacies of the project April 12, City Manager Greg McDanel presented three overarching options to the City Council: acquiring additional funding, rebidding the project as designed and altering the project scope.

“Contractors noted material prices, demand and pandemic challenges, which, at this point, we expected going into it. We were hoping that we wouldn’t be close to \$4 million off,” McDanel said.

Acquiring additional funding was the most time-sensitive option since bids that came in mid-March are only valid for 30 days. Similarly, rebidding the project as designed meant working close to BUILD grant deadlines and battling rising material costs.

These options came after almost daily meetings with the Missouri Department of Transportation and Federal Highway Administration,

which provides guidelines the city has to meet with this kind of large-scale project.

Given these choices, altering the project scope seemed to be the best option, McDanel said, but it wouldn’t be as simple as cutting certain aesthetic features.

“We took a significant look at those project features, some of the street lights, some of the sidewalk widths, but when you’re \$4 million off, that’s a lot to back out on the project without really changing the functionality of everything.”

McDanel said engineers also briefly looked at not going forward with underground utilities, but removing that component of the project impacts design and functionality of the other features and does more harm than good.

Instead, going forward, McDanel discussed a two-phase approach recommended by project engineers. Phase I will complete construction from South Avenue to the Highway V intersection. Engineers noticed a clean break at this point for storm drainage utilities, traffic signals, pedestrian features and lighting. This phase is 55% of the original project length, but it encompasses 80%



RACHEL ADAMSON | FILE

City Manager Greg McDanel discusses the city’s response to issues with water taste and odor in a Missouriian file photo. At the April 12 City Council meeting, McDanel presented a lengthy overview of the South Main project.

of the materials and functionality plans for the project.

Phase II would then complete construction from the Highway V intersection to the Highway 71 Bypass. This phase would require additional outside funding, McDanel said, which the city is seeking through national infrastructure and pandemic response initiatives.

The city has officially applied for what funds are available through Sam Graves initiative “Community Funding Project Applications.”

McDanel said the city officially rejected the bids that came in 23% over the engineers original estimate April 6, and MoDOT accepted that rejection.

With the new Phase I comes the requirement of an additional engi-

neered guide of the city’s plans, specifications and estimates. SK Design Group Inc. should have the guide completed by April 19, McDanel said. MoDOT and FWA reached an agreement to expedite this approval so the city can schedule a rebid.

FULL STORY ONLINE:
NWMISSOURI NEWS.COM



KENDRICK CALFEE | NW MISSOURIAN

John McBride (left) and Dannen Merrill (right) are sworn in to the Maryville City Council by City Clerk Stacy Wood. Merrill and McBride replaced former members Jason McDowell and Matt Johnson at the April 12 meeting.

Merrill, McBride approve first two ordinances on City Council

KENDRICK CALFEE
News Editor | @calfee_kc

The two ordinances Dannen Merrill and John McBride voted on as members of the City Council was a contract to demolish vacant homes and the purchase of a new police vehicle.

But before any of these actions took place, former councilmen Jason McDowell and Matt Johnson had two final voting responsibilities. At the beginning of Monday’s meeting, City Manager Greg McDanel and the rest of City Council thanked Johnson and McDowell for their community service. Johnson hugged Councilwoman Rachael Martin before he took his seat for the last time.

“They have been instrumental over the last six and three years respectively, involved in about every single large-scale project and community opportunity that we’ve had,” McDanel said on behalf of city staff Monday. “We want to sincerely say thank you for your time.”

After approving Maryville’s

payment vendor schedule and findings of the April 6 municipal election, Johnson and McDowell promptly left the community center meeting room April 12. They handed over the reigns to McBride, who focused his campaign on infrastructure, and Merrill, who received the most votes of any City Council candidate since 1999.

Police interceptor

City Council approved the purchase of a 2021 Ford Police Interceptor SUV from Tri-State Ford Lincoln for \$38,878.64. This vehicle will replace another interceptor that was totaled in a crash following a suspect chase in January.

About \$13,000 was paid to the city in an insurance settlement from the January crash. McDanel said salary savings and adjustments to the general fund would cover the other \$25,000.

In February, the City Council approved the purchase of two new patrol vehicles to replace ones with

high mileage, but Police Chief Ron Christian said those vehicles have not arrived yet because of supply chain issues at the dealership.

The Police Department’s fleet of interceptors has been shorthanded due to this issue. Since Monday’s approved vehicle was already on the lot at Tri-State, Christian recommended making the purchase as soon as possible.

Road repairs

McBride and Merrill, almost in unison, leaned forward in their seats when McDanel began discussing additions to the city’s Asphalt Mill and Overlay Project. The project is made up of milling and hot-mix asphalt overlay of several streets in poor condition.

City Council approved a contract with Keller Construction company at its last meeting in an amount not to exceed \$252,013.75. At the April 12 meeting, Council approved an additional \$28,550 in road repairs for this project.

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CRIME LOG

for the week of April 15

Northwest Missouri State University Police Department

April 4
There is an open investigation for property damage on College Park Avenue.

April 7
There is an open investigation for assault in the 4th degree at Millikan Hall.

April 10
There is an open investigation for property damage at Lot 60.

April 11
There is an open investigation for property damage at Lot 10.
Brennan Meacham, 19, was charged for possession of drug paraphernalia at Dieterich Hall.
There is an open investigation for stealing at an unknown campus location.

Maryville Department of Public Safety

Maryville Public Safety

March 27
A summons was issued to **Jordan E. Brady**, 17, for disorderly conduct on the 500 block of West Fourth Street.

March 31
There was an accident between **Lisa E. Watson**, 46, of Ravenwood, Missouri, and **Marcus A. Grudzinski**, on East Edwards Street and South Charles Street. A citation was issued to Watson for careless and imprudent driving.

April 5
A floatation device was recovered on U.S. Highway 71 and East South Avenue.
A summons was issued to **Quinci K.M. Pope**, 22, for dog at large and harboring a vicious animal on the 600 block of Katy Drive.
There was an accident between an unknown driver and **Ashley N. Dery** on the 600 block of North Main Street.

April 6
There was an accident between **Sherry L. Bell**, 76, and **Shelly Steinman**, 49, on the 100 block of West South Avenue.

April 7
A summons was issued to **Grant J. Maurer**, 21, of Corning, Iowa, for driving while intoxicated and an equipment violation on the 100 block of East Thompson Street.

April 9
There was an accident between Elinson S. Mejia Castaneda, 20, **Chad A. Mayne**, 44, of Chillicothe, Missouri, and **Brittney N. Siddens**, 30, of Albany, Missouri, on the 1300 block of South Main Street.

April 10
A summons was issued to **Arnold E. Roebkes**, 60, for trespassing on the 200 block of West Fifth Street.
There is an ongoing investigation for trespassing on the 900 block of South Main Street.
There is an ongoing investigation for fraud on the 800 block of North Fillmore Street.
There is an ongoing investigation for trespassing on the 200 block of West Fourth Street.

ROLLOVER

CONTINUED FROM A1

“A lot of the stuff that we are trying to do has to go through a process, like what we are trying to do for the international students,” Thompson said. “I think it should happen during the summer; I’m not 100% sure. There are just a lot of things we had to do to spend the money on certain big projects.”
Lee-Johnson said she is going to be working with Thompson while transitioning into her new role for the upcoming year. She also said because there are no more Student Senate meetings, she will be working during the summer to make sure this scholarship is given to students.
“International students bring so much to the University and the community, so they definitely deserve that,” Lee-Johnson said. “It’s going to be my biggest thing in the fall and even in the summer to see what steps we need to take for that.”

JOHN VIAU

CONTINUED FROM A1

Several years before he made his way to Northwest, John Viau graduated from Southwest Missouri State University, now known as Missouri State University. He served as a resident assistant there, making memories with other RAs along the way.
Bob Shultz, Russ Been, Sonya Hooper and Stephanie Wood, all fellow RA’s from Southwest Missouri State, recounted doing the job in stressful times. Amid the chaos, they described John Viau as the cool, “Fonzie” person who radiated confidence but was always there in a pinch. Though he never got an acting role on “Happy Days,” John Viau was their person. They could rely on him for anything.
“He reassured me that people see stuff in you that you don’t see in yourself,” Shultz said.
“For me, describing him is like — a wiseness ... he just kind of knew a little bit about everything,” Hooper said.
On the flip side of this wisdom came the fun side of John Viau.

Hooper said she remembers his ability to have a positive outlook, especially when no one else could.
“In some instances he was helping you be better; in other instances, he was just getting a kick out of you,” Hooper said in a chuckle forced through tears. “It was this ‘I’m gonna mess with you now’ thing and it would take a while to realize what was going on.”
This trait held true during his time at Northwest, Redmond said.
In the Maryville community, John Viau helped with various service projects. In an email to all faculty and staff, Northwest President John Jaskinski said John Viau played key roles in Earth Day events each spring and advised Bearcats Go Green, an organization for students interested in recycling and sustainability.
John Viau also worked with Lynette Harbin, Big Brothers Big Sisters of Nodaway County’s executive director, on the Big Green Moveout campaign that the organization has done for the last eight years. The campaign is a way for students to donate items or food when they move out in May rather than throwing it away.
Harbin reflected on John Vi-

au’s time with BBBS of Nodaway County. She passionately explained how John Viau put his all into the campaign.
“He was just phenomenal to work with,” Harbin said. “He was one of those where even though the event probably benefited us more than anybody else, he just took control and made sure it was a successful event.”
She said John Viau was passionate about reducing Northwest students’ environmental footprint. He was able to do just this with the Big Green Moveout campaign.
Harbin said John Viau came up with the idea to set out collection boxes for students to put clothes, unused items and food in. He even handled the transportation of items from the University to BBBS to resell or other organizations such as Habitat for Humanity to collect.
Harbin said BBBS will continue with their campaign this year in hopes to keep the tradition going to John Viau’s standards. She is working with Tina Frueh, facility services director for the University.
John Viau was a member of St. Gregory’s Catholic Church in Maryville and was a Boy Scout

leader for many years. He had strong mechanical abilities and was always willing to help people with their car issues.
Even in the hours leading up to his death, people remembered John Viau to be fully devoted to helping others; He would want friends, family and the strangers who weren’t strangers to live worry free, for the rest of their days.
He was preceded in death by his parents and his sister, Heidi Marie James. He is survived by his wife, Rose Viau; his two sons, Warner Viau and Sadler James Viau; his daughter, Clara Viau; his sister, Erika Pracht, of North Augusta, South Carolina; and several nieces, nephews and friends.
A Mass of Christian burial will be held 10:30 a.m. April 17. A parish and family rosary will be held 5:30 p.m. April 16 and the visitation will follow until 8 p.m.
In lieu of flowers, memorials can be directed to John Viau’s family to establish an educational fund for his children. Donations can be sent to the Bram Funeral Home, 206 E. South Hills Drive, Maryville, MO, or through a GoFundMe account.



ADDALYNN BRADBURY | NW MISSOURIAN

At a mass vaccination clinic, Northwest student Hiba Mahgoub gets her temperature checked before being able to start the vaccine process. At the most recent mass vaccination clinic April 14, 178 first doses were administered and 473 second doses were given as well.

University has no plans to require vaccines

KAILEE FORD
News Reporter | @kailee_ford

Northwest will not require students to receive the COVID-19 vaccine before returning in fall 2021.
As vaccinations begin rolling out, some colleges and universities in the U.S. are requiring their students to be vaccinated before returning for the fall semester, according to an article from CNBC.
Northwest’s Vice President of Student Affairs Matt Baker said the University will not be one of those schools.
The decision to not mandate COVID-19 vaccinations was made last week by the Northwest Leadership Team, which includes Baker as well as President John Jaskinski and Provost Jamie Hooyman.
Baker said that the University decided not to require students to get vaccinated against COVID-19

and most likely wouldn’t require students to be vaccinated unless the state of Missouri required it.
“There’s a lot of ways campuses can go about this, and I don’t foresee Northwest requiring vaccinations,” Baker said.
Baker also said the University would most likely not mandate vaccines that aren’t approved by the Food and Drug Administration yet, which include the current COVID-19 vaccines.
The current vaccines being administered have an Emergency Use Authorization. The authorization is given to vaccines or other medical products not yet approved by the FDA during public health emergencies such as the current pandemic.
Public Health Consultant Gerald Wilmes has been an adviser for Northwest on the coronavirus pandemic since January and

has worked with the Missouri Department of Education and Department of Health and Senior Services and other institutions in the state to keep the University updated on COVID-19 information.
The Missouri Department of Higher Education hosts weekly meetings with representatives of other colleges where they discuss issues such as vaccinations.
Wilmes said that none of the institutions that meet have decided to mandate students to get vaccinated so far but have discussed vaccines for the last several weeks and will continue to talk about it.
If or when colleges or the Departments of Higher Education and Health and Senior Services will mandate vaccines is unknown, according to Wilmes, but if the course of the pandemic started to change, schools would work to make a decision about

vaccine mandates.
Wilmes said that there isn’t enough data to mandate vaccinations for students, citing low coronavirus cases on campus and in the state, but that data is subject to change.
Despite no mandate for students to get vaccinated at Northwest, Wilmes said it is still important to encourage people to get vaccinated and that it could be one of our best chances at getting close to a normal fall semester.
“Just because it’s not mandated doesn’t mean it’s not important,” Wilmes said.
Baker said that Northwest would continue to hold the vaccine clinics and inform students about vaccinations throughout the remainder of the spring semester.
“We won’t tell them to get vaccinated, but we want them to know it’s an option,” Baker said.

STUDENT SENATE

CONTINUED FROM A1

“One of the main things I am really trying to do is have more representation besides just class senators and representatives from organizations here on campus,” Motazedi said. “I really think it would be beneficial for the academic departments to have some voices here.”
Having more representation, Motazedi said, allows for more feedback from students that aren’t usually reached by the Student Senate.
“When we are voting on lowering tuition by 10 cents or (discussing) the rollover budget, that’s a significant amount of money, and I think it’s really important for someone who is in the School of Social Sciences to be like, ‘Hey, we don’t have any seating areas in this building; let’s try to get something there,’” Motazedi said. “I think we really need those voices.”
Another potential problem is



MARYANN JOHNSON | NW MISSOURIAN

Elizabeth Motazedi presents her proposal for new positions at the 99th Student Senate April 13 meeting. The 98th Student Senate said their goodbyes and resigned their positions, allowing the 99th Student Senate to take their place.

whether they will keep the proposed positions if it turns out nobody is available to fill them. With the original proposal from Motaze-

di, Senate discussed only having representatives from the top five departments on campus, but after some feedback, it was decided that

opening it to all 11 departments would be the best option.
The 99th Student Senate President Bailey Hendrickson thinks that they would be able to get those five representatives but may struggle to have people fill all eleven of them.
“The issue is if we are going to be able to get all of the people,” Hendrickson. “If we aren’t able to get all 11, do we settle for the five? Or do we try and get those spots filled? It’s definitely a conversation that the 99th Student Senate will have to have in the fall.”
Despite the potential problem of not filling these spots, Motazedi said the Senate is on board with the approval.
“What we need to do now is get the ball rolling and reach out to students,” Motazedi said. “This would be a trial year for sure. Say we do it, and it’s not working out, and students aren’t interested in this, then of course we can cancel it out or find another solution.”

‘Freedom bill’ caves to vaccine delusions

MARY RICE MISSOURIAN COLUMNIST @TheMissourian



These anti-vaxxers are at it again, and this time they have lawmakers behind them. Last week, state Rep. Suzie Pollock proposed a bill to lower Missouri school immunization requirements, currently in place for vaccines that protect against polio, rubella, rubeola, tetanus, whooping cough, mumps, diphtheria and hepatitis B. The bill would allow children in day cares, K-12 public schools and public higher education to skip vaccine requirements if they have a “religious or conscientious belief” opposing immunizations.

The legislation would change the immunization requirements to only require the meningitis vaccine for college students in public housing. The House Rules Committee is deciding on the measure after the Missouri House Elementary and Secondary Education Committee voted 10-6 in favor of the bill. While Pollock calls the bill a “freedom bill,” it could be seen as a reverberation of the anti-vaccine movement. Anti-vaxxers have been around as long as vaccines have, but the use of social media has allowed the proliferating movement to grow to millions. Back in October, the Centre for Countering Digital Hate reported 31 million people following anti-vaccine Facebook groups. The proposal of Pollock’s bill is another instance of Republican Party members encouraging conspiracy theories supported by social media groups. Anti-vaccine groups have long supported scientifically false claims that vaccines cause autism, they don’t work or they contain metals that pose threats to the immune system. The facts are literally at the public’s fingertips, but too many of these anti-vaxxers think experts can’t be trusted. Millions of people are ignoring basic health safety guidelines, causing outbreaks of preventable diseases. Whooping cough cases were down to 1,010 in 1976, yet cases rose to over 27,000 in 2010. The measles were declared eradicated from the U.S. in 2002, yet spread again with over 600 reported cases in 2014 and another outbreak in 2019 with over 1,200 cases reported. Public representatives supporting bills that allow U.S. citizens to put the public at risk because of their “conscientious belief” in these conspiracies doesn’t help. Most recent vaccine conspiracies are surrounding the COVID-19 vaccine, like it will poison patients with mercury, or it’s being used to implant microchips. The bill was conveniently proposed in the midst of a pandemic, when workplaces and schools are already mandating COVID-19 vaccinations. The United States is nearing a quarter of the population being fully vaccinated, but this bill, along with the anti-vaccine movement, is a roadblock in our country’s path. There is no established evidence to back any anti-vaccine conspiracy theories. This bill caves to dangerous information spread by a group of people unwilling to listen to reason. It’s an embarrassment.



CHRIS YOUNG | NW MISSOURIAN

OUR VIEW: COVID-19 vaccines should be required for next semester

Northwest recently announced that it would be seeking to return to a “traditional campus experience” for the fall 2021 semester. The specifics of what that means have yet to be established, but likely it will be a semester that resembles the fall of 2019 more than the fall of 2020. In order for the traditional semester to be a success, Northwest should do everything in its power to require students to get the COVID-19 vaccine prior to attending in the fall. Required vaccinations for attending Northwest are not a new concept. Northwest requires students have a measles, mumps, rubella — MMR — vaccination and meningococcal vaccination. While the University did not require it, they did also encourage students to receive an H1N1 vaccination in 2010, another vaccine that was developed rapidly in response to a pandemic. Everyone who plans to attend Northwest will also have ample access to the vaccine prior to the fall semester. All Missouri residents were eligible to receive the vaccine April 9, and over 300 students received their first dose prior to that date at Mosaic’s vaccine clinic April 7. The entire country will be opening up eligibility as President Joe Biden announced he wants 90% of adults to be eligible to receive the first round by April 19, and all states have announced open eligibility by May 1.

As we have seen time and time again, recommendations for precautions to slow or stop COVID-19 aren’t as effective as requirements. Marquette researchers found that mask compliance in Wisconsin jumped from 41.5% when masks were encouraged to 90% when masks were required. There, of course, is and will be an outcry regarding any sort of requirement for the COVID-19 vaccine. It will often come from the same people who still don’t believe masks work with zero scientific evidence to support their claim. The speed with which the vaccine was developed led to hesitancy for a significant portion of adults in the U.S. Around 13% of adults say they will definitely not be getting the vaccine, while 17% say they will wait and see, according to the Kaiser vaccine monitor. The speed of the development process does not mean the vaccine skipped important safety steps. It still underwent the same clinical trials as all other vaccines and was authorized by the FDA for emergency use. The reason, in part, for this extremely fast process was the scientific community coming together to make the vaccine in an unprecedented manner. Increased funding from the government, the ability to build on previous research and prioritizing the vaccine all helped with the accelerated development.

Rutgers University, Notre Dame and Duke are some of the schools on the ever-growing list of those that will be requiring students to receive the vaccine in some form or another. Many of the schools that have already announced they will be requiring the vaccine are private institutions. They have more control over attendance requirements for their schools, so they were able to make this decision without approval from state governments. Northwest will have an uphill battle on that front. Gov. Mike Parson does not support a statewide mask mandate despite all scientific evidence telling him it is the right call. The Missouri legislature has recently introduced a bill loosening basic vaccine requirements for things like measles and wants to ban COVID-19 vaccine passports. These aren’t exactly the kind of people to approve of requiring a vaccine that could save and improve lives. Regardless of what it thinks the state government might do, Northwest should still attempt to make getting the vaccine a requirement. If students really want to be cheering together in Bearcat Stadium, having more in-person meetings and maybe even sitting in a class without needing to wear a mask, then they should get the vaccine, and encouraging isn’t enough. The University should require students to get the vaccine for the good of everyone in the Northwest community.

YOUR VIEW:

Do you think Northwest should require the COVID-19 vaccine to attend in the fall?

KAYDEN JONES Freshman Finance



“I don’t think they should just because I know a lot of people have their own thing against them. I know I wouldn’t be completely against it, but I think for some people they have their reasons, and everyone shouldn’t be required to.”

SIERRA SCHEBAUM Freshman Early Childhood Education



“Yes and no. Yes, because it’s good; it’ll help us out, and maybe, we wouldn’t have to wear masks. No, because not everyone would want to.”

AMY NELSON Senior Interpersonal Communication



“I don’t think they should. There are other measures that should be taken, and I don’t necessarily think it should be required for everyone to get the vaccine. I think masks should be something we continue in the fall, but it would be too much to ask. everyone to get a vaccine.”

THE STROLLER: Your Bearcat wants to pet some cows

If you haven’t given much thought to how wonderful cows are, you should. Cows are just like people; they get emotional and happy and sad. That’s why I want to pet one. I had never had an interaction with a cow until last week when I got a lucky chance to stand 3 feet away from one. How does one go their whole life and not pet a cow? All I’m going to say is we should normalize petting cows. Think of all the farms you’ve passed and will pass in the four

years you spend in Maryville. They have more cows than one person could need. Sure, I might have stopped along the side of Highway 136 to gaze at a cow that wandered too close to the fence. Who hasn’t done that? But I’ve never had the courage to give the 1,600 pounds of fluff the love it wants and needs. The vision of a farmer chasing me with his shotgun has stopped me every time. From what I’ve read, cows

make great friends. Some even have best friends, and I want to be that best friend. I want to be able to stop my car and walk on over to ruffle the head of a little baby cow, maybe even have a photo shoot together, but I can’t morally bring myself to do it without the approval of the owner. Perhaps a sign stating, “Pet Our Cows!” would help. So farmers, please let me meet your cows. I’ll bring hay and treats and maybe even Netflix. Imagine a movie night, hang-

ing out in the cornfields with your cow bestie. The stars are shining; everything feels right. It would be the perfect evening. Now that I’ve got you hooked on wanting to pet cows, be sure to go meet one. Visit one of the many farms around Maryville, and maybe even give one a belly rub. I hope it will be a “moo-ving” experience.

The Stroller has been a tradition since 1918 and does not reflect the views of The Northwest Missourian.



ADDALYNN BRADBURY | NW MISSOURIAN
A Missouri Western pitcher attempts to pick off Northwest junior infielder Peter Carlson as he slides back into first base at their home game at the Bearcat Baseball Field April 2. After their game against the University of Central Oklahoma April 13, Northwest fell to 12-15 overall and 10-12 in MIAA play.

Spotty streak travels with baseball on long road trip

THOMAS TURNER
Missourian Reporter | @NWMSports

Northwest baseball had a chance to win every matchup in a three-game series with Central Oklahoma April 10-11 in Edmond, Oklahoma.



The Bearcats made their six-hour return to Maryville with a single win. In game one, Northwest fell down 4-0 early, but the Bearcats eventually started to figure things out at the plate. Junior second baseman Peter Carlson blasted a three-run home run in the fourth inning to cut the deficit to a single run. Senior first baseman Connor Quick followed Carlson's homer with one of his own in the top of the fifth inning to even the game at 5. Quick went 3-for-5 with two runs scored and two RBIs.

"We just have to think about chipping away; baseball is a long game," Quick said. "Carlson hit that huge homer, and by then we knew we were going to win this game."

The Bearcats continued to score, with five more runs in the fifth inning and two more in the eighth en route to a 12-8 victory.

Redshirt-freshman catcher Caden Diel delivered a two-run single. Junior designated hitter Matt Gastner added to the home-run party with a three-run shot of his own and sophomore left fielder Ryan Koski contributed a hit, an RBI and two walks.

"Our hitters are gaining confidence, and we were able to get a lot of runs on the road," Northwest coach Darin Loe said. "We are getting good pitching too, but fortunately, our bats are heating up at the right time."

In the second game of the series, Northwest lost a 9-5 lead in the eighth inning and ended up losing the game 11-9.

The Bearcats continued to hit with a stable of guys getting it done at the plate. Freshman catcher Ethan Judd and Carlson each delivered run-scoring singles. Koski hit his second home run of the season in the sixth inning to put Northwest up 4-3. Sophomore outfielder Drew Mackie and Judd continued to mash at the plate with RBI doubles of their own. Going into the bottom of the eighth inning, the Bearcats had a 9-5 lead.

Carlson has now reached base in 11 consecutive games and has a team-best six multi-RBI games. Koski leads the team with 10 multi-hit games and has a 10-game hitting streak.

"We all can do a lot of damage with a single pitch," Carlson said. "We look to find a way to get the next man up, to give them a shot because we believe in each other."

Sophomore pitcher Alex Slocum entered the bottom of the eighth with a three-run lead, but that lead was soon gone, along with Slocum.

Slocum gave up four hits, four walks and six runs, as the Bronchos took an 11-9 lead. Redshirt-freshman Tanner Smith came in to get the final out of the eighth, and the Bronchos took care of the Bearcats in the ninth

to complete the comeback.

"Just a bad day for Alex. We misplayed a ball in the outfield and that gave them confidence," Loe said. "Off days are gonna happen, but we can't give them confidence and have them come back."

In the final game of the series, the Bearcats fell 7-3 to the Bronchos. Northwest combined for 10 hits during 36 at bats during the game.

Gastner contributed a two-run double and junior shortstop Jacob Pinkerton had an RBI single of his own to help out the offense. Mackie and Quick both went 2-for-5 at the plate.

"Connor went through a slump early, and he is hitting well now," Loe said. "He's driving in a lot of runs, and he had a great weekend. Hopefully, he can carry that into next week."

Bearcat sophomore pitcher Zach Shadlow went five innings and allowed five runs on eight hits. He struck out two in his outing.

After a matchup on the road with William Jewell April 13, Northwest is now 12-15 overall and 10-11 in MIAA play. Central Oklahoma moved to 14-11 overall and 10-8 in

UP NEXT

NW @ Fort Hays
April 17-18
Hays, Kansas

league play. The Bearcats have started 2-3 on their eight-game road trip.

"It's been a rough three weeks for our guys; we've had a lot of things going on," Loe said. "There's been six-hour bus rides, COVID-19 testing, practices and then games. It's a grind. We have to stay healthy, eat right and sleep well."

With a busy schedule, the players still find time to hang out and have fun with each other.

"We are used to being on the road, and most of us enjoy it," Carlson said. "The bus rides are long, but we always have a good time. It's a great group of guys, and we always try to make fun out of it."

The road trip continues April 16-17, as Northwest will travel to Hays, Kansas, to take on Fort Hays State. The Tigers overall record is 5-20 with a 5-16 MIAA record.

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Soccer snaps skid with win against Washburn, readies for final stretch

CORBIN SMITH
Sports Reporter | @curly_corbs

With two games remaining in the regular season, Northwest soccer is looking to close out on a high note. The Bearcats hope to improve their ranking in the MIAA after matchups with Nebraska-Kearney and Fort Hays State April 16 and April 18, respectively.



Coach Marc Gordon acknowledged how tough the games will be because of the conference's depth, and Northwest (2-3-1, 1-2 MIAA) will have to be sound on offense, along with defense.

"The conference is tough all around," Gordon said. "I hope that we can carry over the production of goals we had (against Washburn) and tighten up the defense a little bit. We have to go out and perform to get the results, that's for sure."

Despite the absence of a championship tournament this season, the MIAA will have a postseason tournament of sorts that will take place April 22 and April 25 at campus sites.

The No. 1 and No. 2 teams in each division will face each other to decide which school will face the winner of the same pairing from the opposite division. The losers of both games will then play each other. The same goes for the No. 3 and No. 4 teams, as well as the No. 5 and No. 6 teams.

After Northwest's overtime win against Washburn April 11, Gordon used the potential bracket seeding as motivation for his team to continue winning. However, senior defender Madie Krueger is more focused on taking the season one game at a time.

"We need to focus on the team we're playing — not think ahead, not think of the tournament," Krueger said. "We need to take it one game at a time and believe in ourselves because we know we can do it."

Moving forward, both Krueger and Gordon want to focus on simplifying soccer and not getting caught

UP NEXT

NW @ Nebraska-Kearney
5:30 p.m. April 16
Kearney, Nebraska

up in what the opponent is doing. This game plan, even though it's not really much of one, is partially to combat the experimental schemes teams have implemented this season.

"Some coaches and teams are using this spring season to try new ideas," Gordon said. "There's really no consistency in scouting reports from what I've learned through other coaches. I think we're just going to go out and try to do what we've done to have success."

Although Krueger finds it difficult to not have a set plan of attack heading into matchups, she trusts that Gordon is making the right decision for the team.

"It's not too hard to change our positions," Krueger said. "In the end, we all know that it's the best for the team. If we all just agree and know that he has our best interests in it, we can figure it out. It does throw us through a ringer sometimes, though."

The next matchups against Kearney and Fort Hays will determine which bracket the Bearcats will play in at the conclusion of April.

Gordon is pleased that his team is keeping pace with the upper half of the MIAA, something Northwest soccer doesn't have a deep history of doing. He wants his team to finish out in the top of the conference, building off of where the team finished in 2019, making its first postseason appearance since 2012.

"Just giving the girls the opportunity for a couple more games is how I've looked at it," Gordon said. "I'm hopeful the girls will come out and perform in these last two games and put some meaning behind it."

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ADDALYNN BRADBURY | NW MISSOURIAN
Junior Rachel Sturdevant tips the ball over the net during their three-set sweep against Missouri Western at Bearcat Arena March 17. The Bearcats finish the regular season with a 12-2 overall record and 6-2 in the MIAA North division.

CALVIN SILVERS
Sports Reporter | @CalvinSilvers

Up 24-17 in the third set, Northwest volleyball broke the huddle to fans rising to their feet. While fans were littered throughout the stands due to social distancing, their cheers gave the feeling of a packed Bearcat Arena.

The ball was propped up by Bearcat sophomore setter Alyssa Rezac, leaving junior Kelsey Havel to run up from the left side, obtaining her tenth, and most important, kill of the match.

As the scoreboard tallied the 25th and final point for the 'Cats, the 175 fans in attendance witnessed history. The No. 18 Bearcats (12-2 overall, 6-2 MIAA North) swept No. 10 Nebraska-Kearney April 10 for Northwest's first win over the Lopers (13-3) since Oct. 27, 1990.



Volleyball beats UNK, preps for postseason

"I felt one of the most euphoric feelings I have ever felt," Northwest senior Morgan Lewis said about beating Kearney. "I decided that win or lose, I was going to cry after the game no matter what since it was my last time in Bearcat Arena. I am so happy that I got to share tears of joy with my entire team."

It was an electric afternoon for the Bearcats' offense, hitting at 21.8% and seeing three players capture double-digit kills, including Lewis (14), freshman Olivia Dir (12) and Havel.

"We were on a high level, for sure. I think it starts in practice," Northwest coach Amy Woerth said. "From the standpoint of how hard we practice, we're really getting after it. Playing at a high level, working at a high level, it is fun seeing it translate."

Rezac continued to show why she's one of the best setters in the MIAA, putting her teammates in a position to punish the opposing defense. She ended the contest with 44 assists, surpassing her career high set in 2019.

Rezac wasn't finished, however, as she accumulated season-high numbers with six digs and a block, proving to be the engine that kept the offense running.

"She helps the team get in a groove by just being calm and steady. She's a type of leader that doesn't go high or low; she keeps a really solid consistency and a good head on her shoulders," Woerth said about Rezac. "The thing that you also need to be able to do as a setter is consistently put the ball where it needs to go, and she's able to do

that at a high level."

The Bearcats' defense fed off of the energy given by the offense, limiting the Lopers to 12.4% hitting on the match while tallying 31 kills. The 'Cats responded well to the Lopers' hitters by having 47 total digs.

The victory over Kearney solidified the Bearcats as the No. 2 seed in the North Division and the third-best conference record. Northwest will carry a six-game win streak into the MIAA Tournament, which starts April 16 in Topeka, Kansas.

"It gave us such a sense of confidence. If we can beat UNK in three sets, we can take on anyone in the conference," Lewis said. "It will still be a battle no matter what. This conference can change in the blink of an eye, but I have full confidence my team can perform at that high of a level and beat anyone."

SEE POSTSEASON | A6

Five takeaways from Northwest football's practice with Sioux Falls

JON WALKER
Sports Editor
@ByJonWalker

Welcome back to Walk The Talk, the weekly mailbag column where I answer all of your questions regarding Northwest Athletics. Last weekend, Northwest football lined up against another team for the first time since Dec. 7, 2019. There were 490 days in between the Bearcats' last game of the 2019 season and their joint practice with Sioux Falls April 10 in Bearcat Stadium.



ADDALYNN BRADBURY | NW MISSOURIAN
Northwest football senior wideout Alec Tatum attempts to break a tackle during the Bearcats' joint practice with the University of Sioux Falls April 10 in Bearcat Stadium. There were 490 days in between competitions for the 'Cats.

The practice, of course, won't count toward any record books, or really anything at all. It for sure gave all of us a few takeaways, though.

1. Northwest found an answer at running back

After last season, nobody was exactly sure who was going to line up in the backfield alongside junior quarterback Braden Wright.

Two years ago, the Bearcats addressed the position by adding Josh Caldwell, who transferred from MIAA rival Missouri Western for his final season of collegiate football. Caldwell spent a little bit of time with the Kansas City Chiefs during the preseason after he graduated, too.

Last year, Northwest filled answered any questions about the position by, once again, looking toward the transfer portal. That time, the team brought in Justin Rankin, who previously spent a few years

at Kent State.

Isaiah Strayhorn split reps with both Caldwell and Rankin, but he graduated last year, too, which left the program with no option but to go with an underclassman or look to the transfer portal for the third time in as many years.

Northwest football chose to do both. The team recruited a three-star running back, too — Tank Young from St. Thomas Aquinas High School.

In the practice against the Cougars, sophomore Robert Rawie — who was two-time all-state out of Liberty High School and recruited directly to Northwest — split first-

UP NEXT

NW @ Fort Hays
TBD Sept. 2
Hays, Kansas

team reps with Davonte Green. Green, a junior transfer from College of the Sequoias, played in 21 games during his two seasons in Visalia, California.

During that time, Green tallied 1,665 yards rushing and 12 touchdowns on 312 carries.

"Very excited to be here. Glad to be here," Green said.

SEE PRACTICE | A6

Mahgoub breaks records as track continues success

WESLEY MILLER
Sports Reporter | @wesleymiller360

In the third meet of the outdoor season — April 10 in Wichita, Kansas — the Northwest track and field team saw two 34-year-old program records rewritten and even more athletes meeting national marks.

Across state lines for the Wichita State Open, three Northwest athletes hit Division II provisional marks in their respective events, including one athlete who broke two Northwest records on the same day.

After earning MIAA Women's Outdoor Track and Field Athlete of the Week following the first meet of the outdoor season and surpassing national marks in the women's 400-meter dash April 2-3 at the Southwest Baptist Invite, graduate student Hiba Mahgoub set her name on the top of two Northwest records.

Mahgoub ran a time of 11 seconds and 71 milliseconds in the women's 100-meter dash and a time of 23.83 in the women's 200-meter dash, which both rewrote the program's record book.

Both records were previously set in 1987 by Venus Harris. Additionally, each record was surpassed with less than three-tenths of second separating them. Mahgoub's times in both events were good enough to meet Division II provi-

UP NEXT

111th Drake Relays
April 22-24
Des Moines, Iowa

sional times.

Mahgoub said it was an amazing feeling. She said she saw the 200-meter record coming but didn't even consider the 100-meter record being a possibility.

"I'm thankful I even had the chance to run the 100, since that race isn't my focus," Mahgoub said. "I didn't expect to run as well as I did, but I'm glad I ran the way I did."

Mahgoub said that she has high expectations and goals for herself for this season, and this performance helps let herself know that those goals are achievable.

"I think there are still some things for me to work on," Mahgoub said despite being the newest record holder at Northwest. "I still have not reached my goals."

Mahgoub said her goals are still focused on helping her team and herself be the best in the MIAA conference and in the entire Division II.

At the time of publication, Mahgoub's time in the 200-meter dash sits in the top five among all Division II times in the event.

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